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ABSTRACT

The Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action was formed by the state's Governor to increase cooperation with Caribbean nations and provide on-site technical assistance and training in health, agriculture, social services, and education. In 1996, the Association conducted a project with Muffles College, a junior college in Belize, to develop a strategic planning workshop for the college's faculty, administration, and constituents and to develop and implement an institutional evaluation process for the college. The project resulted in the following outcomes: (1) the strategic planning workshop helped staff identify the college's internal strengths, such as the discipline of the administration and bilingual constituents, and weaknesses, such as the lack of resources and of opportunities for faculty development; (2) the workshop also helped identify changing external conditions related to political, social, economic, educational, demographic, and cultural factors; (3) external opportunities identified included the college's location and cooperative relations with industry, while threats included decreasing finances and a lack of employment opportunities for graduates; (4) an evaluation process was developed that will allow the college to demonstrate accountability and improve educational programs; and (5) the steps of the process include establishing the purpose of review, developing a methodology, developing criteria, establishing guidelines, conducting the review, and implementing any resulting recommendations. Workshop findings and the review process are attached. (HAA)

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INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EVALUATION: THE MUFFLES COLLEGE PROJECT

by

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Abstract

Global interdependence is of particular concern to the state of Florida. Currently, the Caribbean basin accounts for 28.5 percent of all world exports from Florida. In response to increasing economic development between Florida and the Caribbean, the Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action (FAVA/CA) was formed to provide on-site, overseas technical assistance and training in health, agriculture, social services, and education.

FAVA/CA projects are demand-driven. Consultants do not impose technologies and programs on recipients. They respond to overseas assistance requests from their professional counterparts. Projects are "owned" by the requesting organization, whether public or private. Priority is given to projects that create jobs, increase productivity, promote self-sufficiency, and improve living conditions.

The purpose of this project was twofold: (1) conduct a strategic planning workshop for the faculty, administration, and constituents of Muffles College, and (2) develop and implement an institutional evaluation process for Muffles College. The evaluation process included both the academic and the administrative/student services components of the college.

The results of this assignment are threefold. First, the strategic planning workshop helped staff identify and analyze the strategic strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment of the institution, and the opportunities and threats in the external environment of the institution. Second, these analyses form the conceptual framework for the evaluation process developed and implemented by the college. The evaluation process will allow the college to demonstrate accountability to its significant publics and to improve its educational programs. Third, the evaluation process could become a model for other post-secondary institutions of Belize to adopt, i.e., the standardization of evaluation for Belizean higher education.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Brian C. Satterlee currently serves as professor of business and dean of Adult and Continuing Education at Warner Southern College. Warner Southern College, located in Lake Wales, Florida, is a private, four-year liberal arts institution. Prior to joining Warner Southern in 1992, he was director of Technical and Industrial Education at Seminole Community College. He received his doctorate in Occupational Education from Nova Southeastern University, has published nationally within his discipline, and has presented papers at professional conferences. Dr. Satterlee has consulted with numerous organizations on topics related to strategic management in higher education, human resources development, and the development and evaluation of educational programs and services.

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Introduction

Global interdependence is of particular concern to the state of Florida. By the year 2000, Florida is expected to have the second largest population in the United States. The rapid growth in population will require the state to produce additional jobs, business opportunities, industries, and new markets in which to sell its products. The European Community will become a major competitor for Florida's markets. In order for Florida to successfully compete with this large trading block, it must develop a comparable arrangement.

Florida's geography and ports present an excellent opportunity for trade in the Southern hemisphere. Currently, the Caribbean accounts for 28.5 percent of all world exports from Florida. In an effort to continue this trend, Florida must strive to strengthen and develop economic partnerships with the Caribbean. With the belief that Florida's future is interwoven with that of its Caribbean neighbors, Governor Bob Graham formed the Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action (FAVA/CA).

Florida International Volunteer Corps (FIVC), a subsidiary of FAVA/CA, is a one-of-a-kind development partnership between Florida and its Caribbean neighbors. FIVC consultants provide on-site, overseas technical assistance and training in health, agriculture, social services, and education. Those selected to be volunteers are expert consultants in their fields -- from corporations, government, universities, professionals, and trade associations.

FIVC activities are demand-driven. Volunteers are partners, not parents. Corps consultants do not impose technologies and programs on recipients. They respond to overseas assistance requests from their professional counterparts. Projects are "owned" by the requesting organization, whether public or private.

Technical assistance and training are effective when they are timely and accessible. FIVC is a small, action-oriented agency free of institutional constraints which can burden governments and large private organizations. FIVC can recruit, screen, and place consultants in weeks, not years. According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, FIVC assistance has been from 40 percent to 50 percent less expensive than that provided by international technical services firms. Additionally, the consultants have generated up to five dollars in cash, materials, and supply donations for every dollar invested in his or her placement.

Projects focus on positive outcomes. FIVC criteria include solid grassroots support, projects which can be self-sustained, and have high human and economic payoff potential. Priority is given to projects that create jobs, increase productivity, promote self-sufficiency, and improve living conditions.

The Muffles College Project

In April 1996, FAVA/CA requested I serve as a consultant to Muffles College, a junior college in Belize, Central America. The purpose of this project was twofold: (1) conduct a strategic planning workshop for the faculty, administration, and constituents of Muffles College, and (2) develop and implement an institutional evaluation process for Muffles College. The evaluation process included both the academic and the administrative/student services components of the college.

The mission of Muffles College is: "to commit itself to quality education that is relevant to the needs of a Belizean society. It strives to develop the total person -- spiritually, morally, psychologically, intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially -- in keeping with the teachings of Jesus and in the Mercy tradition. It also seeks to create, through active participation of all concerned, an environment of harmony, tolerance and respect for individual differences."

Belize is a Central American nation, bordered to the north by Mexico, to the west by Guatemala, and to the east by the Caribbean Sea. It boasts the second largest coral reef in the world, and significant Mayan ruins, which have been a key factor in bringing about the recent economic boom in tourism. The international interest in Belize has created a local educational curriculum in eco-tourism and other environmental issues. Students from numerous nations travel to Belize to enroll in these courses.

With a population of approximately 200,000, Belize's inhabitants are a linguistic, racial, and ethnic rainbow. *Creoles*, who are primarily descendants of African slaves, comprise twenty-eight percent of the population. They are concentrated in Belize City, and speak Creole (a dialectic form of English). Spanish-speaking *Mestizos* comprise forty-three percent of the population. Ten percent of Belizeans are *Amerindians*, seven percent are *Garifuna*, and *Caucasians* (U.S. or British) constitute four percent (1990 Census data). Other inhabitants include a minority comprised of *East Indians*, and a sizeable *Mennonite* sect concentrated in the Cayo and Orange Walk districts.

Belize is distinguished from other Central American nations in that it is the region's only predominantly English-speaking country. English is still the official and most common language in Belize, but Spanish, Garifuna, and Mayan dialects are also widely spoken. Of increasing

prominence is a hybrid of English and Spanish Creole, locally referred to as *Spanglish*. The Spanish-speaking mestizo population is heavily concentrated in the northern districts near Mexico. However, the language of instruction in all Belizean schools, including the sixth forms and junior colleges, remains English.

Belize was granted independence from Great Britain in 1981. Since that time, Belize has increased its ties to the United States, economically, politically, and culturally. In education, as well as cultural and economic ties, it has increasingly divided its alliances and models between its former colonizer and the United States. The country has, in effect, created a parallel educational system to accommodate both its traditional British structures and the U.S. higher education model. Perhaps the most important recent development in Belizean post-secondary education occurred in 1986 with the creation of the University College of Belize (UCB), the first bachelor's degree-granting institution in the country. To complement its programs, the UCB has established Belmopan Junior College, bringing the total number of post-secondary institutions in Belize to ten. These include Belize Teacher's College, Belize Technical College, Belize School of Nursing, Belize College of Agriculture, Corozal Junior College, Stann Creek Ecumenical College, St. John's College, Belmopan Junior College, the UCB, and Muffles College Sixth Form. The locus of credential-granting authority and institutional recognition is the central Ministry of Education.

As a former British colony with traditionally stronger ties to the Caribbean Commonwealth than to its Spanish-speaking neighbors, Belize continues to participate in the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). The Council administers two types of external examinations: General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level ("O-Level") and General Certificate of Education Advanced-Level ("A-Level"). O-Level examinations are given to

students upon completion of secondary school, and the results are frequently used as admission criteria for post-secondary programs. After students have completed the first two years of post-secondary studies, they may opt to take the A-Level examinations. In British-based systems, students spend the first two years of postsecondary studies in a university preparation cycle. However, in the Belizean hybrid of this system, these years are designed to conform to the U.S. style associate degree track that students may complete with two years of postsecondary course work. The British term for two-year post-secondary programs is "Sixth Form". Belizeans use the terms "Sixth Form" and "Junior College" interchangeably. The terms "College" and "Community College" refer to secondary institutions. In Belize, one graduates from "College" with a high school diploma, and proceeds to enter the "Junior College" or "Sixth Form". One graduates from the Sixth Form with an associate degree, and proceeds to enter the UCB.

In response to demands for post-secondary education in Orange Walk Town, the Ministry of Education requested that Muffles High School expand its curriculum to become a sixth form institution in 1989. The Sisters of Mercy, who have administered the school since its inception in 1967, agreed to help meet this need. Muffles College Sixth Form opened its doors on 24 August 1992, and graduated its first class of students in June 1994. The College offers three programs of study leading to the associate degree: Business, Secretarial, and General Studies. It is administered by an associate dean, who reports to the dean. The dean also serves as the principal of the high school.

The purpose of this project was twofold: (1) conduct a strategic planning workshop for the faculty, administration, and constituents of Muffles College, and (2) develop and implement an institutional evaluation process for Muffles College. The evaluation process included both the academic and the administrative/student services components of the college.

The results of this assignment are threefold. First, the strategic planning workshop helped staff identify and analyze the strategic strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment of the institution, and the opportunities and threats in the external environment of the institution. Second, these analyses form the conceptual framework for the evaluation process developed and implemented by the college. The evaluation process will allow the college to demonstrate accountability to its significant publics and to improve its educational programs. Third, the evaluation process could become a model for other post-secondary institutions of Belize to adopt, i.e., the standardization of evaluation for Belizean higher education.

Attached are the results of the strategic planning workshop and the evaluation process framework developed by the FAVA/CA consultant during the assignment in Belize. The associate dean will implement the evaluation process over the next six-month period. The associate dean has requested the FAVA/CA consultant to return to Belize during the spring of 1997 to conduct a validation visit for the completed evaluation process. Validation visitations are considered a generally accepted practice in the evaluation of educational institutions.

STRATEGIC PLANNING/EVALUATION PROCESS WORKSHOP
FOR MUFFLES COLLEGE
Belize, C.A.

conducted by

Dr. Brian Satterlee, Dean
Adult and Continuing Education
Warner Southern College (FL)

Sponsored by the Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action

19 August 1996

Phase One: ***Workshop participants identified the changes occurring in Belize, in terms of the following organizational factors external to Muffles College.***

POLITICAL FACTORS
constitutional reform
increasing number of females in politics
the advance of CARICOM (Caribbean Common Market)
higher education policy revision

SOCIAL FACTORS
single-parent families
increase in youth gang memberships
decay in values of youth
increasing materialistic attitudes -- influence of U.S. culture
increase in attitude of youth: "I just want to pass" mentality

ECONOMIC FACTORS
GATT protection of local sugar industry to end
USAID support withdrawn from Belize due to increasing standards of living

TECHNICAL FACTORS
Internet
telecommunications
distance learning
computer technology

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS
increasing opportunities for students to gain access to higher education
increase in females attending college
evolving structure of Belizean higher education

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS
more young people
more ethnic blending
English as a Second language becoming prevalent

CULTURAL FACTORS
evolving language, i.e., "Spanglish"
influence of U.S. cable television on youth
intermarriage of ethnic groups
migration of Belizeans to the U.S. for purposes of higher wages to support family in Belize
increasing loss of traditional values and local cultures

Phase Two: ***Workshop participants conducted a SWOT analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of the internal organizational environment, and opportunities and threats of the external organizational environment. The results, to be used in the evaluation process, will seek to develop strategies which emphasize the strengths, manage the weaknesses, capitalize the opportunities, and minimize the effects of and/or eliminate the threats to Muffles College.***

STRENGTHS (internal)
the discipline of the administration
bilingual constituents
institutional size
teacher to student ratio
community support
dedication of staff
Christian values
6th Form integrated with the high school

WEAKNESSES (internal)
library holding
finances
teaching aids and materials (lack of)
cost of tuition and books
lack of faculty development
computer resources (lack of)
lack of ongoing evaluation process
lack of elective courses for students
lack of student-activity facilities
sharing teachers with the high school

OPPORTUNITIES (external)
good location
cooperative relations with industry
classes for adults (night school)
marketability of graduates
faculty involvement in community service
6th Form students tutor high school students
to become the District leader in education
increasing use of the Internet
participate in national academic events
offer scholarships

THREATS (external)
finances
employment opportunities for graduates
erosion of morals and values in society
loss of Mercy Sisters as staff members
competition with gangs for youth
government policies

PROGRAM REVIEW FOR COLLEGES

Dr. Brian Satterlee, Warner Southern College

The stages or steps of a program review process at a college should be:

1. The establishment of the purpose of program review.
2. The development of the methodology of the program review process.
3. The development of the kind and type of criteria to be used in the review process. The kind criteria should include: (1) mission/centrality, (2) quality, (3) cost, and (4) demand. The type criteria should include: (1) instruction, (2) scholarly activities, and (3) service.
4. The development of Guidelines and Procedures for the program review.
5. The initiating and conducting of the program review.
6. The implementation of the recommendations for each program, i.e., the systematic use of the results to improve the program..

Process considerations in program review are important to its credibility, legitimacy, and success. These process considerations are two-fold in nature: (1) general considerations; and (2) specific considerations. They are presented next in outline form.

I. General Considerations

A. Basic Assumptions for Program Review:

1. The plan should be sufficiently broad and flexible to be made operational for programs of instruction and service.
2. The plan should provide for direct involvement of those persons who are concerned with any given program that is reviewed.
3. The plan should be fair, comprehensive, timely, objective, and positive. It includes the use of flexible and multiple criteria, good communication, and implementation procedures.
4. The plan should insure that decisions are made and implemented concerning the improvement of each program reviewed.
5. The plan should provide a check and balance system of review at different levels. It should provide for internal consultants.
6. The plan should provide an appeal process and feedback loops at each level of review.

B. Basic Information and Format for Program Review:

1. Description of the Program.
   a. history/introduction.
   b. mission/goals/objectives.
   c. relationship with other undergraduate programs.
   d. future goals.
   e. other (define and explain).

2. Administration of the Program.
    a. academic.
    b. fiscal.
    c. personnel.
3. Resources of the Program.
    a. facilities.
    b. equipment.
    c. monetary/budget/costs.
    d. personnel.
4. Undergraduate Instruction in the Program.
    a. courses and enrollment.
    b. students.
    c. admission criteria.
    d. other.
5. Faculty of the Program.
    a. number and characteristics.
    b. productivity/research/publications.
    c. teaching and advising.
    d. service.
    e. other.
6. Graduates of the Program.
    a. number and degrees.
    b. positions and/or employment.
    c. other.
7. Evaluation of the Program.
    a. by administration.
    b. by faculty.
    c. by graduate alumni - within 5 years.
    d. perceptions/reputation of the program by others.
8. Summary Profile (yearly).

II. Specific Considerations

A. Purposes.

1. Program quality assessment.
2. Program improvement.
3. Program closure.

B. Criteria.

1. Kind (mission/centrality, quality, cost, demand).
2. Type (instruction, scholarly activities, service).

C. Procedures.
   1. Development of Stages/Steps/Tasks.
      a. purpose.
      b. methodology.
      c. criteria.
      d. guidelines and procedures.
      e. initiate and conduct the review.
      f. recommendation formulation.
      g. use of results to improve program.

D. Methodology.
   1. Eclectic approach.
   2. Develop participant guidelines.
   3. Develop a time frame (emphasis on brevity).
      a. program indicator review system.
      b. program self-study review.
      c. schedule for all college programs.
   4. Use/Outcome: to improve quality.